

**Abstract**

A communication device (such as a cellular telephone, personal digital assistant, portable computer, or other similar device) is provided with a special privacy mode for use when a user desires privacy. Upon receiving a call from a caller, the communication device immediately provides to the caller a greeting, indicating that a user of the communication device desires privacy. However, if the caller needs to immediately contact the user, the caller enters a privacy mode code to override the privacy mode, and the call is then completed and the user is signaled (e.g., the communication device rings or vibrates). Otherwise, if the caller enters no privacy mode code, the call is then routed to a message system and the caller is allowed to leave a message for the user.

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